IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 5 of the specification, please amend the paragraph between lines 18 and 19 as follows:

Figs. 2a through [[2c]] 2d are diagrams illustrating the G.709 optical channel transport unit (OTU) frame structure.

On page 6 of the specification, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 1 as follows:

Fig. 1 is a schematic block diagram illustrating the present invention system 100 for generating alarms from forward error correction (FEC) data in a G.709 network-connected integrated circuit 102. The system 100 of the IC, or processor 102 comprises a forward error correction decoder 104 having an input on line 106 to receive messages including forward error correction bytes. The forward error correction decoder [[106]] 104 has an output on line 108 to supply the number of detected errors in the messages. Although not directly related to the present invention alarm generation system 100, the decoded message can be supplied on line 109, and FEC coded again by an encoder 110, before the message is retransmitted on line 111. Sections of the received message overhead section may be replaced or modified before the message is encoded.

On page 6 of the specification, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 14 as follows.

Figs. 2a through [[2c]] 2d are diagrams illustrating the G.709 optical channel transport unit (OTU) frame structure.